THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) A "Visit India 2009" Scheme has been announced by the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel of India. The incentives being offered by the stakeholders to all tourists from overseas, include complimentary air tickets, hotel rooms, local tours, etc.

Due to these initiatives, the downward trend in foreign tourist arrivals to the country has shown marked improvement with the month of June, 2009 registering an increase of 0.2% in foreign tourist arrivals to the country as compared to the corresponding month of the previous year.

Muziris Heritage Circuit

1449. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Competent authority of Kerala had submitted a project 'Development of Muziris Heritage Circuit' on 26th February, 2009 under Circuit Development Scheme;

(b) if so, the action taken on the above submissions in detail;

(c) if so, whether above submissions would be considered affirmatively;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. A project proposal for development of Muziris Heritage Circuit connecting Historically and Archaeologically important places in Kodungalloor as a mega project, was received during 2008-09 at an estimated cost of Rs. 6775.00 lakh. Since the project was not as per scheme guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism, hence it was not sanctioned.

During the Eleventh Plan, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned projects worth Rs. 7393.83 lakh for integrated development of tourism in the State of Kerala which also includes a project for the Development of Kodungalloor Heritage Tourism Circuit with Central Financial Assistance of Rs. 361.75 lakh.

Hotel rooms for Commonwealth Games

1450. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made arrangements for rooms in hotels/motels to address shortage of accommodation for tourists in National Capital during Commonwealth Games 2010;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of new hotel projects sanctioned and construction works going on?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism has constituted a Task Force consisting of the State Governments of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and various land owning agencies like Ministry of Urban Development, Delhi Development Authority (DDA), Ministry of Civil Aviation etc. which regularly monitors the progress of hotel projects for the Commonwealth Games 2010.

Tourism promotion

1451. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a drastic decrease in the number of tourists to India in last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that tourism can create employment for millions and also help our economy; and

(d) if so, the budget provision to develop infrastructure in various States for attracting tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) The number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during 2006, 2007, 2008 and January-June, 2009 and the growth rates over the corresponding period of previous year are given below:—

Period	FTAs (in Million)	Growth over previous year
2006	4.45	13.5%
2007	5.08	14.3%
2008*	5.37	5.6%
2009* January-June	2.47	-9.3%

*Provisional

While the number of FTAs during 2006, 2007 and 2008 show a rising trend, during the period January-June, 2009 there has been a decline. However, a positive growth rate of 0.2% in FTAs was observed in June, 2009 over June, 2008.

(c) Yes, Sir. As per the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) of India, contribution of tourism (both direct and indirect) in total jobs in the country and its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during 2002-03 were 8.27% and 5.83% respectively.

(d) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to the State Governments/UT Administrations/Central Government Agencies for the tourism infrastructure development under the following schemes:—

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits